



Bishop Wesley J. Gaines, D.D.

A. M. E. Church

Residence: Atlanta, Ga.

BISHOP GAINES presides over the New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, and New England conferences. He was born in Wilkes County, Georgia, October 4, 1840. His parents, William and Louisa Gaines, the former a Methodist and the latter a Baptist, raised him in slavery. He was converted at nine.

His boyhood was spent on the plantation. At eleven, he mastered the alphabet in a week, learned to write from a copy-book, and to read while sick, studying the Bible. In 1855, he removed to Stewart County, Georgia, in 1856 to Muscogee County, and dates his call to the ministry to this time, when he was wont to preach funeral sermons over dead birds and animals. He married, in 1863, Miss Julia A. Camper, who has made him a helpful wife; they have one child, Mary Louisa.

He was ordained to preach in 1865, admitted to the South Carolina Conference in 1866, and ordained elder in 1867. His appointments were the Florence Mission, Ga., 1866; Atlanta, Ga., 1867-69; Macon, 1871-73; Columbus, 1874-77; Macon, 1878-80; Atlanta, 1881-88. He was elected bishop at Indianapolis in 1888.

He has been book steward of the North Georgia Conference, member of the African Methodist Episcopal Financial Board, trustee and treasurer of Morris Brown College, Atlanta, Ga., and trustee of Wilberforce University, Ohio. He is president of the board of directors of Payne Theological Seminary, Wilber-

force, O., and president of the African Methodist Episcopal Board of Publication, Philadelphia. He received the degree of D.D. from Wilberforce in 1883.

A prominent member of the church says: "Bishop Gaines is one of the shining lights of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He is a pious, well-informed, and eloquent preacher, of imposing presence, and of blended politeness and dignity. He possesses both administrative and creative capacity of a high order and adds to his energy, firmness, and ability, excellent tact and discretion. He has done some remarkable work in getting money and building churches." In his ministerial labors, he has raised \$400,000 for the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Early in his pastoral career he wiped out a debt of \$4,500 and completed Cotton Avenue Church, Macon, Ga.; built St. James Church, Columbus, Ga., at a cost of \$10,000; erected Bethel Church, Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, at a cost of \$25,000.

Bishop Gaines is a strong and eloquent preacher. He is a successful author, having published several well-written and valuable productions: "African Methodism in the South," "The Negro and the White Man," "The Gospel Ministry," etc. He has won distinction on the lecture platform. He presided over the Negro Young People's Congress, the greatest gathering of Negroes ever held in the United States.

He has traveled extensively in this country and in Europe, visiting many of the principal cities of England, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and France. He was present and delivered an address at the Clifton Conference. He was master of ceremonies at the meeting in February, 1909, in Atlanta, Ga., held in honor of President-elect William Howard Taft, by the colored citizens.

The Condition and Education of the Negro

Bishop W. J. Gaines, D.D.

NATIONS and races have their difficulties to surmount and the problems of their destiny to settle. Such a time has come in the history of the Negro on this continent of America. He finds himself confronted with questions as grave and far-reaching in their scope and bearing as were ever presented to any people in any age for settlement. I am not alarmed for the final issue to my people when I look into the face of these tremendous problems. I believe that that Providence which permitted our coming to these shores, and the working out of three hundred years of slavery, far from the land of our fathers, is yet guiding us on to a great destiny, and, for one, I look forward to the coming years, not with fearful heart and foreboding doubt, but with a sublime and unfaltering faith, believing that the clouds which now overhang our skies shall break away and the sunlight of a glorious future burst upon us with unclouded splendor.

This destiny will not be wrought out by the sword, as has been the case with other peoples in other ages of the world. The day of blood and battlefields, thank God, is passing away. The triumphs of the future are on far nobler fields.